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ABSTRACT

A study assessed the extent to which the availability of appropriate teaching/training and residential facilities determined current and future levels of activity in continuing vocational education and training (CVET) provision in British universities. Thirty-five of 62 British universities responded to a questionnaire. Six site visits were made to institutions using purpose-built or purpose-adapted facilities. Findings indicated a very wide range of facilities for use in CVET courses. Availability of primary-use and suitable facilities for CVET enabled a university to compete more successfully in the CVET market. A significant minority of British universities had or were committing themselves to having primary-use, purpose-built teaching and residential facilities for CVET on or near a campus site. Lack of residential facilities was perceived as a factor in some universities' capacities to develop more CVET provision. Respondents having purpose-built or adapted facilities were satisfied with them. Respondents in most universities recognized availability of appropriate teaching and/or residential facilities as a limitation on current CVET provision. All universities looked to expansion of CVET in the near future. Most respondents recognized availability of suitable facilities as fairly important to expansion plans. (Six case studies describe the universities according to accommodation. The questionnaire is appended.) (YLB)

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ED 367 831

UCACE OCCASIONAL PAPER NO. 11

UNIVERSITIES COUNCIL FOR ADULT AND CONTINUING EDUCATION

GOOD PRACTICE IN CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

BUILDINGS/CAPITAL INVESTMENT

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Buildings/Capital Investment

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Preface

This paper was produced as part of a Department for Education funded project on Good Practice in University Continuing Vocational Education. It is one of four 'key issue' reports which have been produced as UCACE Occasional Papers.

Copies of all four reports can be obtained from the UCACE Office, Department of Continuing Education, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL.

The four reports are:

- The Internal Organisation of Continuing Education
- The Role of Academic Staff
- Buildings/Capital Investment
- Financial Control and Encouragement

DES/UCACE Project: Good Practice in CVET in Universities

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A Introduction

This report presents the findings from one of the 'key issues' investigations commissioned by the UCACE Project on Good Practice in Continuing Vocational Education in Universities, funded by the Department of Education and Science and directed by John Geale during 1991-2. The purpose of the overarching project was to identify aspects of good practice in University CVET which, if adapted broadly, would contribute to strengthening CVET in the University system. Underlying presumptions about the notion of 'good practice' in the larger project were that good University CVET should be 'sustainable' i.e. on financial, political and administrative and other grounds an on-going and viable part of University provision of education and training; that it should be 'integrated' i.e. an activity inter-related with a University's other teaching, research and consultancy activities and often carried out by many different parts of the University; and that University CVET should, of course, be of high 'quality' (from the points of view of the customer who pays, the student who participates, the teacher who provides and the University which lends its name to the enterprise).

Other 'key issues' reports in the DES/UCACE Good Practice in CVET in Universities Project have been on Finance, Development, Academic staff, Departmental Management, Organisation of CE and Marketing.

Clearly the 'key issue' reported on here - buildings and capital investment - is fundamental to the whole enquiry. Some universities have now invested considerable sums of money in purpose built or purpose adapted teaching and/or residential accommodation for the provision of CVET (often, most particularly, for management development and training). Largely they have taken a considerable risk; they have taken a view that such accommodation will allow them to make the quality provision which they believe the market requires and also that it will increase their market share. Hypothetically some may have taken the view that quality teaching provision may increase the attractions of participation in CVET for university staff. Many other universities have not yet taken this direction although - as this investigation in part indicates - some are contemplating the advantages of doing so.

But what are the facts? At least, what do the people involved believe them to be? The authors are indebted to those who provided information for this report and to those who made themselves available during site visits. It became clear to us during the investigation that some of what we wanted to know was commercially sensitive information and we quite understood when it was not fully available.

Alexandra Withnall has been the principal investigator in this 'key issue'. The authors are very grateful to Alison Graddon who, as research assistant, carried out most of the site visits and to John Geale who commented most helpfully on the work as it developed.

B Aims, Objectives, Methodology and Definitions

The overall aim of this investigation was to assess the extent to which the availability of appropriate teaching/training and residential accommodation is thought to determine current and future levels of activity in continuing vocational education and training provision in British universities.

Objectives

Within this overall aim, the project's objectives were:

a) to identify the range of accommodation provision in use for CVET in British universities;

b) to gather fact and opinion, where possible, on such matters as:-
   (i) the quantity and proportion of CVET provision which is made in purpose-built or purpose-adapted accommodation;
   (ii) trends in the provision of on campus CVET vis-a-vis off-campus closed, customised CVET;
   (iii) the significance of CVET development to institutional capital investment planning;
   (iv) current and anticipated difficulties in the provision of appropriate accommodation for CVET;
   (v) return on capital investment in purpose-built or purpose-adapted CVET accommodation.

c) to assess the significance of different types of accommodation in:-
   (i) promoting sustainability and profitability;
   (ii) assisting the integration of CVET with other aims/activities of the institutions;
   (iii) improving the quality of provision.

d) to analyse key issues and to establish guide-lines for good practice in the provision of accommodation.

Methodology

The following research instruments were developed for the enquiry:

a) a focused questionnaire was designed and piloted in the Commercial and Industrial Development Bureau at Lancaster University and revised accordingly. The final version was then sent to a named contact believed to have responsibility for CVET in each British university, including the constituent colleges of London University (N = 62). 35 responses were received (56%).

b) 6 site visits, identified from the questionnaire returns, to institutions utilising purpose-built or purpose-adapted accommodation (as well as other types in some cases). The fieldworkers made use of:-
   (i) an accommodation/equipment check-list in order to note the nature and range of facilities offered
   (ii) a semi-structured interview schedule for key personnel (usually the Centre Manager) at the six sites
   (iii) any available documentation such as publicity material, price lists, client evaluation forms etc.

Definitions

It was hypothesized that universities would utilise a wide range of accommodation for CVET courses, often of more than one type. A preliminary task, then, was to review the possibilities and define the terms to be used within the investigation. The following seven categories of possible accommodation for CVET emerged from a literature review.

PURPOSE-BUILT

1 Commissioned - Stand Alone
Purpose-built or purpose-designated accommodation for CVET. Accommodation may either be on or near to the main university campus and many have specially designed residential accommodation within the building.

2 Commissioned - Add-on to new premises
Purpose-built CVET premises as a section of a newly built larger complex; this may take the form of a purpose-built suite of rooms either using the residential facilities of the larger complex or without residential accommodation.

3 Commissioned - Add-on to existing premises
Purpose-built accommodation for CVET which may or may not have residential facilities attached.

PURPOSE-ADAPTED

4 Purpose-adapted rooms and facilities:
This term refers to rooms and facilities, with or without residential accommodation, already in existence and which have been specially adapted for CVET use (although they may also be available for other university and private training activities).

SHARED USE

5 Shared use-designated
Refers to circumstances in which suitable university accommodation and facilities are available (with or without residential accommodation) and are in fact designated for CVET use, but are also shared by a number of other users on an equal basis.

6 General Purpose
This refers to circumstances in which CVET providers must compete with other university departments (or other users) for the use of particular university-owned accommodation (with or without residential facilities) because there are no specialist or designated rooms or equipment available or affordable to them.

7 External
Covers all accommodation not owned by the particular university such as hotels, private training centres etc. which CVET providers may either be compelled to use because of lack of other facilities, or may choose to, for a variety of reasons such as convenience of location, cost etc.

C Overview of data collected

The aim of the questionnaire sent to all universities was to gather basic information concerning:

(i) the range of accommodation provision in use for CVET in British universities including facilities available - for teaching/training purposes, social support and residential amenities;
(ii) publicity;
(iii) perceived levels of satisfaction of staff and customers;
(iv) limitations on capacity to make CVET provision;
(v) future plans.

Although the questionnaires were despatched to a named CVET contact, it was not always clear from the returns who had actually completed them. In some cases, the respondent had pointed out that s/he did not have complete knowledge of all available facilities especially where individual departments had responsibility for their own short course provision. This comment should be borne in mind in the following analysis.

Table 1 analyses the universities from which responses were received according to geographical region and type of university. A reasonable national coverage was achieved: the poorest response rate came from Wales and the English Midlands.

Table 1 Type of University/Regional Spread

Region/type of university	Ancient	Civic	Post War New	Technological	London College	Total
Wales		1				1
Scotland	3	1	1	2		7
N.Ireland		1	1			2
North	1	5	2	2		10
Midlands		1	1	2		4
South		3	3	2		8
London					3	3
Total	4	12	8	8	3	35

1 The range of accommodation provision in use for CVET in British universities

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to indicate all of the types of accommodation which were used for CVET purposes. All attempted to do so but some drew attention to the limitations of their own knowledge.

Table 2(a) shows the total response:

Table 2(a) Range of Accommodation in use for CVET

Accommodation Type	With Residential Accommodation	Without residential Accommodation	TOTAL
Purpose-built			
1 Commissioned - stand alone	5	2	7
2 Commissioned - add on to new premises	3	2	5
3 Commissioned - add on to existing premises	1	4	5
Purpose-adapted			
4 Purpose-adapted	5	15	20
Shared-use			
5 Shared-use-designated	6	8	14
6 General purpose	10	18	28
7 External	17	12	29
Total	**47**	**61**	**108**

Table 2(a) shows clearly that most respondents made reference to use of three or four accommodation types for CVET purposes within their university. A large majority made use for CVET of general purpose, non-designated teaching accommodation (28); 10 of these also made use of university residential accommodation. 29 of the respondents referred to use of external premises - which included the hiring of hotel residential and training rooms on the one hand and use of in-house company training suites on the other. Purpose-built or purpose adapted university CVET accommodation was less common. There were 17 references to purpose-built CVET accommodation from 15 universities; there were 37 references to purpose-built and/or purpose-adapted CVET accommodation from 24 of the 35 universities. 8 respondents made no reference at all to use of residential facilities. No university used only external facilities.

Table 2(b) uses the device of treating the types of CVET accommodation defined on page 4 above as a hierarchy (from 1 'Commissioned - stand alone' to 7 'External') and characterising each university by its highest response in the hierarchy. Thus universities with purpose-built accommodation for CVET will be characterised by it. Thus:

Table 2(b) Characterisation of Accommodation in use for CVET

Accommodation Type	Number		
Purpose-built			
1 Commissioned - stand alone	7	}	
2 Commissioned - add on to new premises	4	}	15
3 Commissioned - add on to existing premises	4	}	
Purpose-adapted			
4 Purpose-adapted	9	}	9
Shared-use			
5 Shared-use - designated	3	}	
6 General purpose	8	}	11
7 External	0	}	

Table 2(b) confirms that in 24 of the 35 respondent universities there was accommodation of which CVET provision was the prime or first-call user. Table 2(c) presents the same data analysed according to type of university from which the responses to the questionnaire came (see Table 1).

Table 2(c) Characterisation of Accommodation in use for CVET by Type of University

Accommodation type / Type of University	Ancient	Civic	Post-War New	Technological	London College
Purpose-built					
1 Commissioned - stand alone	1	2	2	2	
2 Commissioned: add-on to new premises		1	1	2	
3 Commissioned: add-on to existing premises		2	1	1	
Purpose-adapted					
4 Purpose-adapted	3	4	1		1
Shared-use					
5 Shared-use designated		1	2		
6 General Purpose		2	1	3	2
7 External					

No clear pattern emerges from Table 2(c) although one may note that nearly two thirds of the technological and half of the post-war new universities have purpose-built CVET accommodation. One might argue that the former have an orientation to this sort of provision and the latter are more likely to have space on which to build.

2 Detailed analysis of range of accommodation for CVET

Using the allocation of each university to a particular accommodation type (as in Table 2(b), it is possible to present the questionnaire responses in a more detailed manner.

(i) Commissioned - stand alone accommodation for CVET use

	No. of responses
with residential accommodation	5
	(1 under construction)
without residential accommodation	2
TOTAL	7

All these respondents also made use of at least one other type of accommodation, notably CVET purpose-adapted rooms and facilities or non-university accommodation with residential facilities. Although respondents had some difficulty in estimating how much of their provision actually took place within the differing types of accommodation, only one respondent reported as much as 80% taking place within a specially constructed separate building. 3 respondents were just as likely to make use of shared use accommodation and 4 respondents commented on the difficulty of running CVET courses on campus during term time, especially if residential accommodation was required:

'depends on subject. If lab-based, it's difficult. If residential, long lead time required...'

In all cases, all or some of the specially constructed accommodation was available for hire by other organisations for private training purposes. 4 respondents reported further accommodation for CVET courses contracted, but not yet built/available. In two cases, this was additional teaching/residential accommodation. In one of these cases, this was to be financed by bank loans; however, the other respondent reported that there would be:

'complicated arrangements leading to full recovery of capital costs and to become an income-generating profit area.'

The two other respondents' new buildings were to be financed by arrangements with clients who would have first call of some of the accommodation and by capital from external developers.

Respondents were asked to indicate, from a lengthy check-list (see questionnaire in Appendix 1) what facilities were available to them for training purposes, for customer support and for residential purposes when mounting CVET courses. It was noticeable that, although all respondents reported availability of teaching/seminar rooms and a wide range of support facilities in their purpose-built premises, a larger number of facilities was more likely to be available in shared-use accommodation including greater availability of a computer suite or language laboratory in teaching/training areas and a wider range of facilities for relaxation and leisure.

However, it appears that, in separate purpose built premises where residential accommodation is available, this is likely to be of superior quality to shared use accommodation in terms of numbers of en-suite bedrooms, specially provided bars, private lounges, executive dining rooms with high quality catering etc. In any case, CVET providers will have first call on buildings especially constructed for sole CVET use whereas, as has been noted, other accommodation may not be readily available at short notice.

Respondents experienced some difficulty in recalling the variety of equipment for training available to them for CVET provision and in distinguishing between locations but four reported the availability of full sound systems in lecture theatres and full audio-visual facilities as standard plus a conferencing facility. There was a general assurance that any specialist equipment not already available could be hired.

(2) Commissioned: add-on accommodation to new premises

	No. of responses
with residential accommodation	3
without residential accommodation	1
TOTAL	4

The four respondents who possessed this type of accommodation also used other types, especially shared use of non-designated accommodation and non-university accommodation with residential facilities. They did, however, make much greater use of their main facility, two estimating that 70-90% of their CVET provision took place here. Nevertheless, there was some difficulty in running CVET courses during term time on campus:

'Little difficulty (other than overbooking) when using purpose built CVET buildings. Very difficult when utilising traditional University facilities'.
'Difficult at some peak demand times only'.

All respondents reported that at least some of their teaching/training accommodation was for hire by other organisations. One respondent commented that new training/residential accommodation was contracted and it was "mixed university and private finance" which would pay for it.

Asked to respond to the check-list of facilities available in relation to training, customer support and residence, the four respondents generally reported a wide availability of the facilities listed in their purpose-built accommodation including in one case, the use of a language laboratory. One university pointed out that the premises were used by departments for non-CVET purposes. The facilities listed were less likely to be available in shared use accommodation.

All four respondents had access to a full sound system in lecture theatres and to full audio-visual facilities, whilst only one did not have the other equipment listed in the questionnaire. Two mentioned that equipment could be hired.

(3) Commissioned: add-on accommodation to existing premises

	No. of responses
without residential accommodation	4
TOTAL	4

One respondent in this category pointed out that, in his university, accommodation was dedicated to continuing education and training generally and that CVET made use of this accommodation.

All four respondents utilised other categories of accommodation especially shared use of non-designated accommodation. One calculated that 80% of CVET provision took place within the purpose-built accommodation, but estimates as low as 30% were given by other respondents. In spite of the facilities available, all reported difficulties in running CVET courses on campus during term time e.g.:

'The demand for space from our part-time and full-time modular MBA courses means that responding to a client's need for a tailor-made course within, say, six weeks of initial contact can be difficult'.

In all cases, all or some of the accommodation was available to other organisations for private training purposes. Three of the four respondents reported planned further teaching/training accommodation, one with residential facilities. Sources of funding for this were cited as the European Regional Development Fund, UFC Minor Capital Works Grant (and a possible collaborative venture with industry) and a university re-allocation funded out of block grant.

Although respondents all had teaching/seminar rooms available in their purpose-built accommodation and three had a lecture theatre, availability of other facilities was thinly spread. Respondents were more likely to have access to facilities, including residential accommodation in shared use accommodation - although the difficulties of having this available at short notice have been pointed out.

One respondent claimed to have access to all the types of equipment mentioned in the questionnaire check-list. All had a full-sound system in any lecture theatres they used, but other facilities varied in availability - audio-visual facilities, conferencing facilities and computer data projection equipment were most likely to be available.

(4) Purpose-adapted rooms and facilities

	No. of responses
with & without residential accommodation	3
without residential accommodation	6
TOTAL	9

In this category, three universities offered purpose-adapted accommodation both with and without residential accommodation. All also made use of various types of shared use accommodation and all used non-university accommodation and facilities, suggesting that universities make greater use of this kind of accommodation where similar facilities are in short supply within the University.

Respondents in this category had difficulties in estimating what proportions of their CVET work took place where. The most positive estimates were 75-90% taking place in purpose-adapted rooms and facilities, but obviously, this accommodation also had to be shared with others in most cases. Of those who were able to respond to this question, five estimated that 10-20% of their CVET work took place in non-university accommodation.

Four respondents reported a degree of difficulty in running CVET courses on campus during term time, especially if residential accommodation was required, e.g.:

'Main centre is the ..... campus and this is much overused'.
'Non-residential courses - relatively easy. Residential impossible without using hotels.'

Another commented that s/he *'did a lot at weekends'* to *'avoid problems'*. Otherwise, one respondent reported that s/he could *'usually find space, even though it may not be great'* and another pointed out that:

'the teaching and residential accommodation is available to the Short Course Development Office (SCDO) on a priority basis (up to four weeks before use the teaching accommodation is allocated to the SCDO and up to three months before use the residential accommodation is. This system works well.'

8 of the 9 respondents agreed that all or some of their accommodation was available for hire. Interestingly, 5 respondents reported further accommodation for CVET courses was contracted to be built and that this was, in all cases, at least teaching and residential accommodation. In one case, it would also include en-suite bedrooms and conference facilities and in another, offices and a new teaching block. One respondent pointed out that the new accommodation would be shared by other departments.

Respondents gave little detail on sources of finance for the new developments. Little information was available other than 'University', 'UFC', 'Borrowing', 'Our reserves', 'Loan to University'. However, one respondent was able to describe:

'a package with private and public sector finance, but may resort to University-only finance'.

Respondents experienced some difficulty in coping with the check-list of available training support and residential facilities, since much of the purpose-adapted accommodation they utilised was necessarily also shared by other departments and providers and could thus be categorised as shared use. In general, they were most likely to have teaching/seminar rooms purpose-adapted for CVET use, but little else. Half could offer photocopying and fax facilities but, as has been seen, residential facilities were generally unavailable. Teaching/training and support facilities were much more widely available in share use accommodation; of the four who could offer residential accommodation, this was mostly student rooms with usual student facilities.

Regarding equipment, two respondents were unable to detail what was available and only one other was aware of the full range. However, seven respondents could make use of a full sound system in lecture theatres and full audio-visual facilities including audio-visual conferencing. One respondent was not sure what some of the equipment actually was, but added *'but we might have something equivalent'.*

(5) Shared use with other departments of designated but not specially adapted accommodation for CVET

No. of responses

with residential accommodation	2
without residential accommodation	1
TOTAL	3

One of these three respondents reported use of no other accommodation but the two others made use of non-university accommodation and facilities. Of the two who were able to respond, it was estimated that 20-40% of provision took place in shared use accommodation, the rest being in non-university facilities. One of them reported difficulty in running CVET courses on campus during term time - *'shortage of space; faculty teaching undergraduates'* - but another respondent commented:

'Only problem is non-availability of Halls of Residence, but offset by use of local hotels'.

All three respondents reported that all or some of their teaching/training accommodation was available for hire. None had plans for further development.

None of the three respondents in this category had access to all the facilities mentioned in the check-list, although two of the three could use lecture theatres and language laboratories. Support facilities were considering restricted apart from public telephones, dining room and access to student leisure facilities. Accommodation was in standard halls of residence (with use of hotel in one case if necessary). Availability of equipment was limited to standard audio-visual facilities, a lecture theatre and a sound system in one case.

(6) General Purpose - Shared use with other departments of non-designated, non-specially adapted teaching/training accommodation

No. of responses	
with residential accommodation	1
without residential accommodation	5
with/without residential accommodation	2
TOTAL	8

One of those without residential accommodation attached a note to the effect that this may be available *'elsewhere'* either on or off campus, but during vacations only. The respondent with residential accommodation could make use of the University Conference Centre. A further respondent pointed out that his/her university made occasional use of hotels or company premises. 3 respondents also reported use of non-university accommodation together with residential facilities, whilst two others used the accommodation without residential facilities.

Whatever facilities they used, the respondents in this category found it straight forward to estimate that 80-100% of their CVET provision was made in shared-use, non-adapted premises (100% in 3 cases) with comparatively little elsewhere. Of those responding, 7 reported that running courses on campus during term time was very or fairly difficult. Problems related to:

'...block booking rooms and accommodation/residential'.
'...staff time as well as space restrictions'.
'...we have no specially adapted/built accommodation for CVET and the best of the available general accommodation is in short supply and overused'.

Two other respondents commented in depth:

'We have no designated CE classrooms, either during term or in vacations. 80% of our courses are run in the departments where the tutors are based. During term time alternative premises (e.g. hotels) must be used on occasions where rooms are not available'.
'One-day events requiring one lecture theatre are relatively easy since the University has one lecture theatre not generally used for undergraduate lectures which is, therefore, more available (providing lunch for the event is usually the bigger problem...). Events requiring a pleasant, flat-floored location or more than one room for, say, workshop sessions, pose a great problem during term time'.

Although available accommodation was limited, 3 respondents stated that all, and 3 some, of the premises they used were available for hire by others. One university reported that further CVET accommodation which would consist of both teaching and residential accommodation was planned through a benefaction to one of the colleges of the university. Another had further teaching/training accommodation planned to be financed by the University, but *'we pay for use'*.

These respondents generally reported a very wide range of facilities available to them for running CVET courses, although there was less availability of photocopying and fax machines and since premises had to be shared, the difficulties of access in term time were stressed. Where residential facilities were provided, this tended to be in standard student accommodation in vacations only, although 3 providers could now offer en-suite bedrooms. Availability of equipment was very limited, although 6 respondents had access to computer data projection equipment and 5 to full audio-visual facilities.

3. Publicity

Respondents were asked whether description and/or photographs of accommodation and facilities were used in any publicity material used to attract CVET customers and, if so, which features were stressed. It was hoped to examine the extent to which the existence of high quality accommodation and facilities could be used as a marketing tool to promote CVET provision.

i) Universities utilising purpose-built accommodation

14 of the 15 universities having types of purpose built accommodation responded to this question of which 12 stressed particular features in their publicity material. 4 forwarded specimen brochures. Whilst 2 commented that the extent to which they would stress accommodation facilities would depend on the target audience, others would be most likely to draw attention to accessibility, the pleasant environment and, where available, the standard of residential accommodation with emphasis on catering with attractive illustrations. 2 respondents particularly stressed the versatility of training suites, the high standard of equipment available, extra facilities such as fax machines and photocopiers, and one drew special attention to the fact that equipment was available as part of a package and not as an extra cost. In general, respondents were at pains to accentuate the quality and versatility of what they had to offer.

ii) Universities with purpose-built adapted accommodation

8 fo the 9 universities utilising, among other types, purpose-adapted accommodation responded. 5 of them stressed features which tended to be related to a particular university's attractive location. Only 1 advertised the university's dedicated facilities.

iii) Universities with shared use accommodation

All 11 of the universities utilising primarily shared use accommodation responded but only 5 mentioned premises in their publicity material and this tended to be general university publicity and not particularly CVET - related. One university did mention its specialist science facilities and computer suites.

4. Perceived levels of satisfaction of staff and customers

i) teaching accommodation

Respondents were asked to assess how satisfactory they considered existing teaching accommodation to be in relation to both staff and customers who make use of it. Replies indicated that those having purpose-built/purpose adapted facilities were most likely to be satisfied in all or some respects. However, respondents pointed out that, where they had a range of facilities, this satisfaction did not necessarily extend to shared use facilities:

`Excellent in the purpose built accommodation. Some of the other space is pretty rough!'

`Insufficient rooms with adequate quality'.

`This comment relates specifically to the purpose-built CVET accommodation NOT to the normal University campus facilities'.

`It is difficult to get cleaning etc. done in term-time between student courses and CVET courses'.

`At peak load times, there is sometimes not enough of the highest quality teaching or residential accommodation available. Much of what is available is only appropriate for a medium-priced event and some of it is not even suitable for that'.

`Teaching rooms could be a lot better located - currently the main room has insufficient natural light. Also, offices are not satisfactory and I am restricted as to how many people I can employ in the central office due to lack of space'.

`The facilities are heavily used. It is often a case of fitting in activities between full-time and part-time undergraduate programmes. The normal problems of degradation from use then occur'.

Amongst those respondents having access only to shared use accommodation, whether designated or not, although generally seen as `satisfactory in some respects' for staff and customers, two respondents found their teaching accommodation `unsatisfactory in all respects'. Only one reported total satisfaction but s/he commented that day-time CVET courses in term-time would not anyway be provided.

Other comments related to `noise', to the problems caused by shared use and to the fact, in one case, that

`Customers (are) usually happy with classrooms being used - major headache for staff who are trying to organise the event'.

Of the two who were dissatisfied, one explained that her response

`..is based on a general view of the situation in the context of the University's commitment to considerable growth in CVET'.

The other respondent also commented on the need for

`a massive investment'.

ii) equipment

Regarding satisfaction with available equipment for CVET courses, those in purpose-built/purpose adapted accommodation found this in all cases satisfactory in some respects. Those in purpose-adapted facilities were most likely to be satisfied in all respects. However, once again, a few respondents stressed that whilst equipment was generally of an excellent standard, it might be `patchy' in shared use accommodation where this consisted of ordinary teaching rooms. One respondent expressed a personal opinion:

`Some equipment is too sophisticated. There is a lack of simple things like blackboards'.

It was noted earlier that some providers had to hire equipment other that standard items; one respondent commented that

> *`..highly specialised equipment has to be borrowed from faculties and this is not always easy. A theatre with full language translation facilities would allow for more international events'.*

Those having only shared use accommodation, although generally feeling that equipment was satisfactory in some respects, commented similarly on the cost of hiring equipment and two on the desirability of having more `high-tech' equipment available.

iii) support facilities

The questionnaire contained a varied list of 12 support facilities which, hypothetically, a business customer might expect to have conveniently available (e.g. telephones, car-parking, reception, fax).

Those having purpose-built/purpose adapted accommodation generally felt that support facilities for customers were satisfactory in most respects. Five respondents felt that they were satisfactory in all respects - although the very wide range of facilities that customers wanted was also noted. Where additional comments were made, they tended to relate to a number of disparate issues including car-parking difficulties and catering limitations at certain times, etc.

Those having shared use accommodation reported that support facilities were satisfactory in some respects. Since they were usually referring to shared use student campus facilities, the picture was very mixed. It was noted that, in one case:

> *`as an internal customer, CVET is not always treated with full customer care'.*

Another respondent commented:

> *`depends upon the particular facility, but overall not geared to the CVET customer'.*

iv) residential accommodation

As might be expected, those having a separate building especially constructed for CVET use together with residential accommodation generally saw this residential provision as being satisfactory in all respects in relation to CVET customers. Those with other types of purpose built/purpose adapted accommodation were, on the whole, satisfied with the residential accommodation available to them, although in some cases the accommodation available was felt to be insufficient. There were also a few respondents who commented on the variation in types of rooms available, especially those unable to offer full en-suite facilities e.g.

> *`300+ excellent en-suite rooms - rest mediocre. Only 20 en-suite rooms available in term'.*

> *`Size can be problem, other bookings and cost (it's relatively expensive').*

Other respondents regretted the fact that they could not compete with best quality hotel accommodation and some of those having purpose-adapted teaching accommodation were only able to offer student halls of residence for bed-spaces. There was thus a mis-match between the quality of teaching and residential accommodation which would deter customers:

> *`The amount of reasonably satisfactory residential accommodation is inadequate for the demand for that standard, and we have no really high standard accommodation - which, again, we could use'.*

> *`Halls of residence can be used, but I do not personally regard this as appropriate. Residential courses tend therefore to be run in hotels'.*

Four respondents reported recent re-furbishing of residential accommodation or plans for development in the near future, generally to provide en-suite facilities.

The very few respondents in shared use accommodation able to offer residential accommodation regarded this residential accommodation with mixed feelings. Most regarded it as satisfactory only in some respects. Comments included:-

> *`...new halls very good. Older halls used as a last resort'.*
>
> *`Some of our accommodation is outstanding - some less so'.*
>
> *`Some people may be content with halls of residence, but we would really like to be able to offer a better grade of accommodation'.*
>
> *`We have good accommodation, but sometimes difficult to get access to it because of other users (e.g. conferences').*

5. Limitations on capacity to make provision

Respondents were asked to assess the extent to which existing accommodation and facilities for CVET courses in their institutions limit their capacity to make provision.

Some did not accept that, in general terms, accommodation and facilities are a current limitation on their university's capacity to make CVET provision:

'Provision simply has to be made elsewhere'

'A determined department will not let a scarcity of appropriate accommodation on-campus stop it. It is quite possible to hire'

'Accommodation can be found externally'

'We adapt to what we have'

'We try to work around the limitations'

'We can easily use external facilities at present levels of operation'.

Table 3 shows, however, that respondents from most universities - even those with purpose-built or adapted accommodation - recognised availability of appropriate teaching and/or residential accommodation as a limitation on current CVET provision. Context suggests that such comments often applied mainly to provision made in shared use accommodation. The three chief characterisations of respondent university (purpose-built, purpose-adapted, shared use) derived from Table 2(a) are used to analyse data.

Table 3 Existing accommodation available for CVET as a limitation on capacity to make provision

	PURPOSE-BUILT		PURPOSE-ADAPTED		SHARED USE	
	Teaching/ training accommodation	Residential accommo-dation	Teaching/ training accomm-odation	Residential accomm-odation	Teaching/ Training accomm-odation	Residential Accommodation
A great deal	1	2	1	2	2	4
To some extent	6	4	1	3	5	3
A little	5	4	6	2	2	2
Not at all	1	3	1	2	2	2

Table 3 is difficult to comment upon because there is not an even distribution of response. One might argue that a number of inter-linking factors are involved and, in the absence of such contextual factors as size and location of university, volume of CVET provision and indicators of CVET markets to be penetrated it is not possible to interpret meaningfully. It looks as if universities with purpose-built CVET accommodation (which may be in a different CVET market position from other universities) may be signalling on-going problems in keeping pace with the quantity of demand, e.g.:

'In terms of quality of provision, there is no limitation in the purpose-built facility. Quantity can be a problem at certain times as popularity of usage groups'.

Those universities characterised by shared-use facilities may, on the one hand, have excellent local suitable hotel provision and/or, on the other hand, modest plans for CVET development.

Few respondents regarded availability of equipment or support facilities as a significant inhibitor of their capacity to make CVET provision. One who did observed, however, that in these respects:

'Customer expectations led by private providers are not always met'.

One interesting comment on equipment, perhaps indiicative for the future was:

'Distance learning facilities are an issue. We would like to develop, but it needs space and investment'.

6 Future Plans

Expansion

Respondents were asked to what extent they anticipated that CVET activity would expand in their university 'in the near future'. Their answers were couched, presumably, in the context of the respondents' judgements on a likely upturn in the national economic recession and of the capital investment which the university had already made, or was planning to make, in provision for CVET. However, as Table 4 shows, answers were relatively buoyant throughout and there was no general difference between responses from universities with different provision of CVET accommodation.

Table 4: Anticipation of Institutional Expansion of CVET in the near future
[number of responses]

Accommodation type	Purpose-built	Purpose-adapted	Shared-use
A great deal	6	3	5
To some extent	8	5	4
A little	1	1	2
No expansion	0	0	0

Role of accommodation in expansion

All universities, therefore, looked to expansion of CVET in the near future; many, a significant expansion. But, in general, was the availability of suitable accommodation going to be a brake on these expansion plans? Respondents were asked two further questions about the future - whether ability to provide suitable teaching/training accommodation on the one hand, and suitable residential accommodation on the other, was going to be *'a crucial factor in your planned levels of expansion'*. Table 5 summarises the responses:

Table 5: Teaching/Training Accommodation and Residential Accommodation as Crucial Factors in University's CVET Expansion [number of responses]

	Teaching/Training Accommodation			Residential Accommodation		
	Purpose-built	Purpose-adapted	Shared-use	Purpose-built	Purpose-adapted	Shared-use
Very important	5	4	4	4	2	4
Fairly important	8	5	4	8	4	4
Of no importance	1	0	3	3	2	2
Not relevant	1	0	0	0	1	0

There was a marginal ambiguity in these two questions. Those respondents from universities which already had, in their judgement, suitable accommodation had to choose in their responses either to affirm the importance of this provision in future CVET expansion or to discount its importance - it was a factor no longer 'crucial'. Moreover, those universities planning to expand CVET only 'a little' (see Table 4) were not likely to see development of suitable accommodation as a 'crucial' factor. Nevertheless, most respondents recognise availability of suitable accommodation as at least 'fairly important' to expansion plans. The development of suitable residential accommodation was emphasised less than that of teaching/training accommodation. There

were at least two reasons for this difference. One was the greater capital investment which, it could be anticipated, appropriate residential accommodation would require (and the commercial risk entailed). The second reason, which several respondents indicated was a cornerstone of their plans for expansion, was the availability of suitable local high quality hotels:

'Being near good hotel accommodation, we will probably concentrate on upgrading teaching/learning facilities. A proposal to this effect has been put to the appropriate committee'.

'Quite a few of our conferences are run in hotels'.

'We have good contacts with local hotels which are close to campus'.

'Use hotels if necessary'.

Thus we discerned at least five attitudes to the development of high quality residential accommodation in the expansion of University CVET:

(a) that it was unnecessary
'It would seem an efficient use of buildings if CVET courses fill up any spaces in normal university accommodation and so far this is what we have done'.

(b) that it was unnecessary because of the availability of suitable local hotels.

(c) that it was necessary, but less necessary than the development of suitable teaching/training accommodation.

(d) that it was necessary but not part of any institutional plan and
'not appreciated by all sectors of the University'.

(e) that it was necessary e.g.
'to attract upper echelons of management'
and was either in place or had resources committed to it.

Confirmed Plans for Capital Investment

We looked again at those universities which, respondents told us, were planning to expand their CVET provision significantly and particularly at those which had committed themselves to plans for capital investment for accommodation. 14 universities, so respondents told us, expected to expand CVET provision *'a great deal', 'in the near future'* (Table 4). Of these 14:

4 already had purpose-built/purpose-adapted teaching/training accommodation dedicated to CVET use (one of these responded:
'we keep building to match projected new provision with institutional plans'

3 already had purpose-built/purpose-adapted teaching/training and residential accommodation for CVET use

2 had already committed resources to purpose-building/adapting teaching/training accommodation for CVET use

4 had already committed resources to purpose-building/adapting both teaching/training and residential accommodation for CVET use

1 had made no plans.

On this evidence, it looked as if a significant group of universities were both planning to expand CVET provision and had committed resources to capital investment to support that expansion. As described on page above, the sources of finance for this investment were various. Bank loans, benefactions, appeal funds, an 'external developer', a deal with a large company which would use much of the training accommodation, UFC Minor Works Capital Grant, 'other' University finance. One respondent wrote:

'New buildings can only be justified if funded from donations and appeals. Few universities can expect to finance charges out of CVE income'.

Beyond the 14, there remained the other 21 universities which responded. As another respondent put it:

'I believe that very few Universities have made the capital investment needed to run CVET on a really professional basis'.

However, 3 respondents wrote in that the trend in University CVET provision was/should be away from campus:

'It is possible to plan on the assumption that there will be no plans for on-campus provision; conference hotels and in-house training are expected to be the norm'.

'There may be an increase in 'in-house' courses'.

'in-house courses growing importance'.

Other Comments

Several respondents emphasised to us that their university's provision of purpose-built/adapted teaching and residential accommodation had been led by the needs of the business or management school. As one wrote:

'The provision of high quality accommodation with appropriate teaching facilities is vital. A visiting Canadian Professor of CE advised us that "the way to the business man's pocket is through his stomach and not through his head". Sadly, he may be right. To concentrate on looking after the catering is as important as all the other facilities'.

Several others noted that despite its draw-backs and inconveniences, there had been in the later 1980's some up-grading of parts of the regular accommodation for students. Blocks of en-suite residences had been built. Out of term-time this was, at least, more acceptable to CVET clients.

Of course, others commented on the exclusive accommodation focus of our enquiry. Accommodation may be important for the development of CVET provision, they wanted to say, but there were other factors beyond the scope of our enquiry:

Markets, time, appropriate teaching staff [are] more important'.

[Accommodation] is a factor, but somewhere down the list. More important factors are current workloads and kudos (or lack of it) / promotion prospects attached to CVET provision'.

D CASE STUDIES

Fieldwork undertaken at six universities identified from the questionnaire returns as utilising prime use CVET accommodation (as well as other types) resulted in the collection of a considerable amount of information concerning features of accommodation, equipment, support facilities, staffing etc. and why the decision to set up such facilities had been taken. Of the six selected, four had purpose-built teaching and residential accommodation (Warwick, Stirling, Lancaster and Reading); two had purpose-adapted teaching accommodation (Hull, Dundee). Some salient features of the case studies are described below in order to illustrate how these universities are attempting to establish good practice in the provision of appropriate premises and facilities for CVET courses. The universities visited are described according to how respondents categorised their accommodation within their questionnaire returns. It was noticeable, however, that those interviewed sometimes could not, or did not wish to provide details relating to finance, future plans etc. with regard to buildings and accommodation so that the desired information was not always readily available.

1. The University of Warwick

Warwick University has three purpose built residential Management Training Centres whilst facilities for conferences and other training events can be provided on the main campus where it is hoped that 1000 en-suite rooms will be available by the end of 1993. The Warwick campus is situated in rural surroundings but has good communication links with all parts of the country.

The newest and largest of the three centres in Scarman House, built on a newly developed site just opposite the main University campus and offering the facilities of a 4-star hotel. Scarman House has a resident Centre Manager and a staff of 80 and provides attractive training facilities dedicated to managerial, industrial. commercial and professional needs. Teaching/training accommodation includes a 100 seater tiered lecture theatre, 11 flat floored teaching rooms with seating capacity ranging from 22 - 36 and 40 syndicate and case-study rooms to allow for flexibility in teaching. All teaching rooms are fitted with projection screen, white board, flip chart and slide projectors. All rooms have an air change system based on body heat and a computerised locking system for security.

Scarman House offers a large restaurant, optional private dining, bar areas and a games and exercise room. The reception area which is always staffed has a small newsagent/gift shop, cloakrooms, public telephones and a message taking service. Photocopying, facsimile and secretarial assistance are available. Private parking facilities are just outside the building. 200 en-suite bedrooms are available, including some twins, doubles and two executive suites, there is also access for the disabled. Delegates usually stay for an average of 3 nights. Customer feedback is sought by questionnaire and satisfaction constantly monitored with improvements being made where finance allows.

Radcliffe House, on the same site, was completed in 1986, and now has 154 study en-suite bedrooms, two lecture theatres (installed and used largely by the Business School). 9 other teaching rooms with flexible seating arrangements, 18 syndicate rooms, a reception room and a lounge and bar.

At present, Radcliffe House is being expanded and there are plans to provide further residential accommodation both there and at Scarman House. The third centre, Arden House, is situated on the Westwood site, a few minutes' drive from the main campus and is mainly used for post-experience course in engineering with 95 - 100% of recruitment from within the university.

Recruitment for Scarman and Radcliffe House takes place on a nationwide basis through the distribution of glossy brochures and at conferences, especially CONFLEX, the annual exhibition of conference facilities held at Earls Court in February. The centres won the 'best academic venue' award in 1990/91 for conference facilities awarded by Travel Magazine and this fact is used in publicity and in that of suppliers since it is felt that this helps to build a good image for the university generally. A sales and marketing executive has been in post since Christmas 1991 and has already obtained a considerable amount of business for the centres.

At present, Scarman House's accommodation is contracted to KPMG Peat Marwick which provided financial assistance for the buildings, from July to December each year. Business is taken from anyone at other times. Generally, 80% currently comes from private organisations and the rest from within the University (although academic staff are perceived as having been slow to make use of it). These proportions are nearer to 50% in Radcliffe House, about 90% of Radcliffe's customers use the residential facilities; Scarman House's bookings are 80% residential, but day meetings are also popular. Talks are currently underway with a number of large companies wanting to make use of Scarman House for training purposes although most of the business obtained has been repeat bookings from satisfied customers.

It is hoped that future expansion will go some way to satisfying demand, especially in September/October when some business has to be turned away. Negotiations are taking place with National Grid (located near the campus) to use Radcliffe for management training; this company will finance the first four years' occupancy and the University will rent the accommodation back from them. There are further plans for expansion and for further landscaping of the grounds by the addition of a lake and an area for wildlife which will both enhance the site visually and demonstrate awareness of environmental issues. The Severn-Trent authority assisted with drawing up plans for this, but had to withdraw because of financial constraints - the plans remain to be used.

Both Scarman and Radcliffe Houses are now generating profits from their accommodation and Scarman House has become a limited company with a yearly business plan in place. Although the manager of Arden House operates within a different management structure, all three centres are currently co-operating in producing a code of conduct on bookings, charges, VAT, booking procedures, insurance risks, cancellations, clauses, mutual responsibilities etc. Now in draft form, these guide-lines are expected to be in operation as University policy by October 1992.

Although staff were able to identify some improvements which could be made to the premises and facilities, the three centres were able to offer attractive and comfortable accommodation and there was an awareness that the customer 'is becoming more discerning'. It appeared that the Centre Manager's previous experience in the hotel industry and his involvement from the outset in planning the facilities of Scarman House had helped to contribute to its early success.

2. <u>The University of Stirling</u>

Stirling Management Centre opened in 1988, is situated in purpose-built accommodation on the edge of the University of Stirling's campus and has good road and rail connections with other UK cities and nearby airports at Glasgow and Edinburgh, making it easily accessible. It is, of course, a considerable distance from the south of England. The centre is currently open all year round and has been awarded 4 crowns (equivalent to 3 star) by the Scottish Tourist Board. It is run as a commercial venture with 35 full-time staff employed by Gardner Merchant and 4 full-time staff paid by the University. (Other facilities on campus - for conferences and holiday-makers - are also run by the commercial operations department within the University.) The Management Centre has a good reputation as a conference centre as well as a venue for management training.

The teaching/training facilities consist of 9 principal meeting rooms of various sizes in the conference wing seating 181 in total, although these capacities can be increased by using a theatre-style layout. All conference rooms are fitted with 'working walls', VHS video recorders, large-screen monitors, slide and overhead projectors, flipcharts, whiteboards and projection screens. The video suite can be used for interview training. Any extra items or specialised equipment is available at additional cost. There is also a computer laboratory with 30 workstations loaded with Lotus 1-2-3, Word-perfect and other software. Certain ground floor bedrooms can also be used as syndicate rooms. An outside paved area, equipped patio style can be utilised in hot weather.

The restaurant, seating 120, offers high quality catering including special function meals if required and there is a bar and lounge room service available in the 75 en-suite bedrooms of which 24 are doubles, 4 are twins and 2 are singles for disabled guests. The bedrooms are on ground and first floor levels, but with no lift. There is easy secure parking with an overspill car park. Help with luggage transportation is provided. The reception desk is fully staffed with a night porter; luggage storage space is available. Delegates and trainees can make use of the campus sports facilities when available at no extra cost, although since delegates usually work late, they may not be much used. If necessary, an administrative office can be set up with on-site word processing

facilities using either the client's or the centre's own staff. Telephones - including a mobile type telephone - are readily available. A merchandising display cabinet sells gifts, souvenirs and 'essentials' such as ties and cuff-links ' to those who have misjudged the evening formality'.

Recruitment is currently carried out UK-wide and also in Europe with the centre having recently hosted a number of prestigious international conferences and gatherings. Reports of these are used widely for advertising purposes within a special folder detailing the facilities available on a series of factsheets.

The centre attempts to obtain continual feedback on customer satisfaction with the facilities offered from all users. This is achieved by a visitor survey left in each room (95% returned). Staff hold monthly 'quality meetings' to which a recent user is invited and two aspects of business are chosen to be discussed. Where possible, attempts are made to satisfy customer demand - e.g. £10,000 has been spent on improving audio-visual equipment in all of the training rooms.

A new sales and marketing office was set up in April 1991 at which point a new marketing plan was formulated and presented to the University for approval. Planning targets set for the Management Centre are for 65% occupancy of bedrooms since this is where revenue is made. Although occupancy is often as high as 80-90% for much of the year, business tends to be seasonal and there are periods of the year, notably July-August and December-January, which are not buoyant.

Currently, approximately 20% of business comes from within the University, although only 5% of this is CVET. The rest is general management development with 80% coming from private organisations.. Clients include local and national government departments, blue-chip companies and some smaller organisations. About 80% of customers make use of the residential facilities; there is generally 90% occupancy during weekdays (except Easter), but weekend bookings vary considerably. Although 90% of business is estimated to be repeat bookings, this can actually present a problem in that new business is really required to increase profit margins - 'regulars try to beat us down a bit on price'.

Although a new budget will be available in August 1992, there was a reluctance to discuss future plans because of worries about competitors. However, it is hoped to extend the restaurant and to increase weekend usage by linking up with a number of Scottish Polytechnics involved in distance learning by offering preferential rates. Simultaneous translation facilities are also seen as a desirable permanent addition as they have to be hired at present.

Although the facilities available at Stirling Management Centre were generally considered excellent, it was noted that the University does not make great use of it for its own CVET courses. Presumably, this is on grounds of cost - it may be cheaper to use facilities elsewhere on campus for some clients who do not require top-quality accommodation.

3. The University of Lancaster

Lancaster House Hotel and Management Development Centre opened in August 1991 and is therefore still in its first year of operation. It is the result of a collaborative venture between English Lakes Hotels Ltd. and Lancaster University which owns the Management Development Centre situated on the ground floor of the hotel in a special wing. On the edge of the university campus in a rural setting, the hotel is close to the M6 and main line inter-city rail services. The Centre was developed because, although CVET courses are held in other university accommodation, this was becoming increasingly difficult to obtain in term time and it was felt that such accommodation is not necessarily appropriate to top levels of management. The Management Development Centre now offers facilities for post-experience residential courses, short courses and private training activities.

The Centre has a Conference office, a Centre Manager employed by the University and support staff to handle bookings, but otherwise, clients make use of the hotel facilities in the usual way. Offering its own secure, well-lit parking facilities approached by a drive from the main campus, and also from the main road, the hotel tries to combine traditional design features with modern leisure facilities and appropriate high-tech equipment.

There are three training suites available, each having 3 syndicate rooms. Maximum capacity is 240, but each suite usually takes 30 people. Fully air-conditioned, each training suite has telephone, TV/video, computer socket outlets, a 'teaching wall', a Pendax rail system with visual aids and computer data projection equipment available on request. The large centre lounge can be used as an additional training suite and the Dalton Suite, which is officially the hotel's own function room, can also fulfil this role with a capacity of 150 people. An executive room is provided, a fully-equipped photocopying room (converted from an intended learning resources room) and a computer room which is set up for individual use and is linked to the university Mainframe computer. Special attention has been paid to the lighting, decor and furnishings and the room layouts are flexible. A paved patio area with seating can be utilised during refreshment breaks. Except for 3 card phones, all telephones are connected to the university system.

Clients are accommodated in the 80 en-suite study bedrooms, 68 of which are twins. There are 2 'luxury suites', 6 executive and 4 rooms for the disabled. All the bedrooms are equipped with work desks, computer sockets linked to network computers, mini-bar, safe and dedicated fax point. The hotel has a traditional restaurant seating up to 96, a bar and a lounge/reception area where clients can mingle with hotel quests. Newspapers are provided; there are ample cloakrooms and a small gift shop. Clients can also make use of extensive leisure facilities including swimming pool, sauna and fitness studio. Outdoor leisure activities and cultural events are available on the main campus.

Recruitment is carried out on a nationwide basis through the marketing activities of the University's Commercial and Industrial Development Bureau and through the Centre's own publicity material. It has been found, in the first six months of operation, that companies are willing to come from all over the country and some find it advantageous to 'get staff right away from base and all the distractions'.

'A large percentage' of business is from university CVET courses and the majority of business is residential; however, small one-day events can be organised. In order to keep cost down, some customers use the facilities but stay elsewhere, although four different meetings and conferences accounts plans are offered plus preferential weekend rates. Some enquiries have been received which could not be accommodated because of size - these can be referred to the university, thereby generating further income rather than losing potential customers.

Customer feedback is provided by exit questionnaires to everyone using the centre and, so far, this has always been positive. 'A large proportion' of business has currently been repeat, e.g. British Nuclear Fuels Ltd. uses the Centre extensively, but significant business also comes via the Management School.

Although the Centre feels that 'the mix is just right', it is probably still too early to know exactly how customers are reacting at present. 'Clearly budgeted targets' are set for occupancy levels at Lancaster House - but specific information on these was not made available. Centre staff consider that early success is due to having taken expert advice at the outset as to how a purpose-built training facility should be set up. Currently, staff would like to expand the facilities in order to generate further business. It was noted that 'customers increasingly expect and are used to better accommodation than that normally provided for the undergraduate population. There is considerable internal and/or external competition to promote this.' However, not all internal CVET providers choose to use this facility and it may be that it is important to be able to offer a range of different venues in terms of price/location/facilities/availability. Lancaster House Management Development Centre was built in order to widen this choice and to enable provision to be made when university accommodation is in short supply.

4. University of Reading

Black Horse House, a residential training and conference centre, is situated on the campus of the University of Reading and is a purpose-built facility designed as an extension to the campus branch of Lloyd's Bank. It was opened in February 1990, apparently with backing from the bank and from British Airways who were instrumental in setting it up. British Airways later obtained their own training facilities but, following financial adjustments, now use the centre again. Because of Reading's major road, rail and air links, the centre is easily accessible from the UK and from abroad.

The centre is run with a small staff, i.e. one Manager and 11½ staff at the Centre plus some part-time. They are part of the general university catering/housekeeping staff. There is always someone available to deal with e.g. late arrivals and at least one member of staff sleeping in. Because of low staffing, weekend trade is generally not pursued. However, a tendency has arisen for conference/training organisers to make delegates travel in their own time on a Sunday for an early Monday morning start in order to save time and money - this means that staff have to be paid extra for Sunday evening duties.

Parking is available for 35 cars at the centre (extra on request). Teaching/training facilities consist of two seminar rooms in which the seating can be arranged in different formations with capacities ranging from 26 - 60 and 18 - 22. The larger seminar room, on the ground floor, has 2 syndicate rooms seating 6 - 10 and there is a meeting room (and bar), capacity 40, on the first floor. This is used as a lounge-bar area in the evenings if required. Seminar rooms are equipped with VHS video and monitor, slide projector, OHP and screen, whiteboard and flipchart as well as well as laser pointers requested by users. Specialist audio-visual equipment, personal computers, telephones, photocopying and fax facilities are available at an extra charge. Camcorders are currently the usual extra requested. It may be that the main centre users here do not require particularly sophisticated equipment.

The private dining room seats 50 and a full list of menu choices is provided on booking. personal menus can be provided. The centre is close to the Senior Common Room for additional bar/catering facilities. Tea/coffee can be provided in the bar and there are telephones/cloakrooms on the ground floor.

Residential accommodation consists of 34 single en-suite bedrooms including 2 adapted for the disabled, although because of its central campus position, the centre can occasionally be noisy. Extra rooms, without facilities, are available in the Senior Common Room building. Security is particularly good with a special telephone between the main entrance to Black Horse House and the car park. The centre is also very safety conscious. Leisure facilities are available on the campus and groups can arrange exclusive use of sports facilities at discretionary rates, (although CVET courses usually 'work late'). The Students Union shops, bank and University library are at hand. In spite of these good facilities, centre staff are aware of improvements which could still be made, mainly relating to residential accommodation and support facilities.

Recruitment is carried out on a nationwide basis with a part-time staff member operating a 'marketing bureau'. Mailshots are sent out to former and prospective clients. A leaflet and brochure are available and the centre is featured in the university's Industrial Liaison Business News, which aims to let industry, commerce and the professions know about the range of services provided by the university.

Currently, about half of business obtained comes from university CVET courses, the rest from private organisations. About 75% of customers use the residential facilities, but staff would like more to use these. A few small bookings have been made, going up to 3 years hence. Spare accommodation during the week is filled by 'bed-and-breakfast' and efforts are being made to find out which university departments are running courses in order to market residential facilities. Because of its attractive geographical location, the centre is comparatively easy to use as a day venue. About 50% of business comes from repeat bookings - customer feedback comes from questionnaires filled by customers on internal courses. Because of space, it would be difficult to 'build on' so there are no plans for expansion or new accommodation/equipment in the near future. There are other training/residential facilities available in other parts of the campus and the university markets its facilities and services fairly widely, so that Black Horse House has to stress its comfortable yet business-like surroundings and the expert advice and organisational skills offered by its staff in order to generate income.

The Black Horse Centre works to planning estimates for occupancy rather than actual targets. The University's Statistics Department helps to generate these estimates. No information was made available on the relationship of actual occupancy to estimated.

5. University of Hull

The Dennison Centre, named after a former Vice-Chancellor, is Hull University's centre for professional development and is situated opposite the main university campus. Originally dating from circa 1830, the buildings, two semi-detached large villa houses, have formerly been used as a military hospital and for student accommodation. They were opened as the present centre in October 1991 (official opening June 1992). A video-conferencing studio will be opened in September 1992 by the Plant Manager of Kimberly-Clark, a company bringing new factory jobs to Hull. It is intended to invite a number of other VIPs on the hope of attracting company sponsorship to provide more teaching rooms. The centre is to have a nautical theme, representing Hull as a city, to be echoed in e.g. pictures on loan from the museum/art gallery.

Staffing consists of a Centre Manager and other support staff, working shifts so that clients can stay late if necessary; and a technician responsible for setting up all the rooms as required. A further technician appointment will be made shortly to run the video-conferencing studio.

Parking is available for 70 cars. As the centre does not have its own residential accommodation, transport by taxi/minibus to local hotels is included in the charges. Teaching/training accommodation consists of a conference room seating 120 - 130 theatre style with full sound system and intercom link to the office - this was sponsored by Northern Foods; the Midland Bank similarly sponsored the Board Room which is equipped with whiteboard and flip-charts. On the first floor are 8 additional teaching/seminar rooms (for 4 - 50 people) and a dedicated computer suite. Computers may be set up in some of the teaching rooms if a demand appears. State of the art audio-visual facilities are standard throughout. Camcorders and 'telesales' training equipment can be hired. Language/translation equipment can be supplied at a nominal fee from the main campus. There are very good security links from every room to the campus security linked to the police.

Although no cooking is done on the premises, there is a dining room seating approximately 60, opening on to a pleasant conservatory. The major booking at any one time has first claim on these catering facilities; other clients use foyers or teaching rooms for refreshments, but in any case, it has been found that most organisations prefer to keep customers in their room. A bar is available. There are plans to move the catering area because of noise problems.

Other support facilities include a suite of offices on the top floor for hire; access to administrative/office/fax facilities and cash and card telephones on different floors. There is disabled access and specially adapted cloakrooms on the ground floor, but no lift. The university sports facilities can be used for an extra fee.

The video-conferencing studio, when open, will be unique in the United Kingdom (the BBC has the only similar system for World Services). It will be linked with INTERNET studios in Bristol, London and Paris and can be satellite linked e.g. to the USA. It obviously has implications for training via distance learning.

The decision not to provide residential facilities for the centre was taken after a survey of probable users suggested that these would probably be local firms. However, it was not anticipated that local companies would bring employees from other areas to Hull because of the facilities available. Thus, local hotels have to be used at a special rate. The university owns two properties adjacent to the centre and it is expected that 'when the need arises', these may become accommodation for the centre. As yet, nothing official is known.

As stated previously, most recruitment is on a local basis, but some marketing abroad is being carried out via Hull City Tourism which is quite successful in attracting European clients. In addition, the special facilities of the centre are being promoted through the County Council's European Development Unit.

It is currently estimated that up to 30% of business comes from university CVET courses and 70% from private organisations. Approximately 30% of customers may need residential facilities. Since October 1991, the centre has operated at around 70% capacity on room bookings and about half of business obtained is repeat bookings. As yet there are few bookings for the summer, and weekend business tends to be slow, but it is presumed that this is because the centre is relatively new and there is confidence that the following summer will be busy. An overall occupancy target of 60% has been set.

Regarding customer feedback, there is a great belief in the personal touch in that people are asked for their reactions as they leave and any complaints are dealt with immediately. Some improvements to the accommodation - double glazing, blinds, landscaping etc. - are planned and it is hoped to have additional computers available. It appears that the centre is seen as a very prestigious annexe to the University of Hull and therefore, the university is sympathetic in accepting the centre's needs and is prepared to offer some finance accordingly. However, obtaining sponsorship from local companies appears to be the way forward in extending teaching/training accommodation.

6. University of Dundee

At Dundee, training programmes and conference facilities are provided in the Tower Building situated in the centre of the campus, under the auspices of the Centre for Continuing Education. The Tower Building originally contained the university library and was converted to its present role in 1989/1990. The only disabled accessed building in the whole university complex, it is linked to other parts of the campus by some pedestrianisation. Parking is virtually unavailable.

All teaching/training accommodation is located on the first floor. This was equipped with money provided by the university and through charitable and European funds. It consists of a multi-functional reception area where exhibitions can be mounted and refreshments served; a conference room seating up to 120; a training complex, described as a large and flexible facility accommodating 80 people in comfort and which can be subdivided; a seminar room for 16 participants; and the Opus Room which is actually a computer teaching suite, equipped by the Centre for Continuing Education with support from Opus Technology plc. 2 ground floor rooms are also available for short term use. The training complex is equipped with projectors, flipcharts and screens as standard. Other equipment is available via the Central Media Department with a charge being made to outside users. The seminar room has 2 whiteboards, screen, flipchart, projector and video.

Reception, cloakrooms and telephones are available at first floor level; photocopying can be done by prior arrangement and a fax number is given pre-course (but has not so far been used). There are facilities for refreshments and a finger buffet. A catering service is provided through the Centre by the university's Residences Office in the ground floor restaurant. Other catering facilities are offered at nearby Bonar Hall but prices here may be too high for internal users. There is no residential accommodation, but student facilities can be used in vacations. Other departments using the teaching/training facilities will send out lists of local hotels/bed and breakfast accommodation if necessary.

Generally, recruitment does not take place on a nationwide basis as Dundee is seen as 'too far north' for most people. 90% of business comes from university CVET courses - of this, 60% are MBA students. The remaining 10% comes from private organisations having some university connection e.g. NCR. Some attempt has been made to mount Saturday seminars but these have not proved popular. It has been found, in any case, that medical and technological departments tend to rely on their own accommodation for training because of the necessity for specialised equipment. Target occupancy figures were not made available.

Currently, since most of the business generated is internal. some work is in progress to help local firms see what the university can offer them - more marketing is seen as necessary for this and it is hoped to produce an informative booklet. There did not appear to be any plans for expansion at present.

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E Overview and Summary Conclusions

On the basis of the data presented in sections C and D of this Report, it seems possible to offer the following summary conclusions which, taken together, offer an overview of the outcomes of the investigation.

1 The range of accommodation in use for CVET courses in British universities, on the evidence of this survey, is very wide. Even where purpose-built facilities with residential accommodation are available, use is still made of purpose-adapted and shared use accommodation. This fact reflects the very complex and varied organisational arrangements for CVET courses operating in different universities and the spread of the CVET market.

2 All or most of the prime-use premises universities used for CVET courses are available for hire by other organisations. It may in fact be more profitable for universities to hire out premises rather than make them available to internal users, a fact which may restrict internal providers' abilities to make appropriate provision.

3 Where no designated CVET space is available for teaching/training purposes and providers are in competition with others, CVET organisers are hampered in their ability to make appropriate provision, especially during term-time. One solution to this has been to allocate facilities on a priority basis through a central office dealing with short course development. The quality of non prime-use accommodation available has sometimes been an inhibitor of CVET development.

4 Availability of prime-use and suitable accommodation for CVET enables a university to compete more successfully in the CVET market. Some clients require courses at short lead time. Without prime-use availability, universities may find it necessary to turn down business solely for lack of space.

5 A significant minority of British universities have or are committing themselves to having prime use purpose-built teaching and residential accommodation for CVET on or near a campus site. Sources of finance are very mixed and various.

6 There is likely to be a multiplier effect in the future. As high quality prime use accommodation becomes more common and popular in universities, its usage will increase, requiring further expansion in the future.

7 Lack of residential accommodation is perceived to be a factor in some universities' capacities to develop more CVET provision. A growing demand for good quality residential accommodation to be able to attract the higher levels of management client on a nationwide basis is recognised in many universities. Although some universities currently make use of local hotels, this is not always as satisfactory as on-site provision, because transport and time costs are incurred and intensive modes of teaching and learning are inhibited.

8 Information on target and actual occupancy rates for prime use teaching and residential accommodation has not been made readily available. It is not absolutely clear that all universities have set such targets or can bring figures on actual occupancy rates to hand. It may be that realisation of initial targets has been particularly vulnerable to economic recession. On the other hand, there are notable instances of success in the exploitation of prime-use accommodation by Universities with a clear sense of CVET purpose and clear-cut financial and decision-making structures.

9 Some universities do not expect or wish to spend money on purpose-built or adapted accommodation for CVET. To the contrary, they expect to rely on accommodation provided by nearby good quality hotels and/or predict expansion in CVET provision which will be in-company.

10 There is some anecdotal evidence that availability of purpose-built or adapted high quality teaching accommodation is, in itself, an inducement for members of University staff to become involved in CVET provision.

11 It is important to be able to offer both internal and external users a variety of appropriate equipment for training purposes, or at least to make sure that it well be readily available for hire. Although a wider range of equipment was felt to be available in shared use accommodation, access to this was often found to be limited.

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12 Some universities have given considerable thought to issues of client comfort and security with regard to car parking, disabled access, high quality catering, availability of cloakrooms, public telephones, shops, papers, xerox and fax machines, secretarial support etc. The availability of leisure facilities, whilst very attractive, does not appear as important in that clients working intensively on short courses do not have time to use them.

13 Where there has been investment in purpose-built and well-equipped premises for CVET, these are likely to be of superior quality which can be used act as an important publicity and marketing tool to attract a wider clientele both for CVET courses and to draw attention to the university and what it has to offer as a whole.

14 In prime-use CVET accommodation a premier requirement is the availability of an appropriate number of reception and support staff (with someone available at all appropriate times) having adequate office space in which to work; and an agreed booking system with terms and conditions, account plans and cancellation charges clearly set out.

15 Where clients are involved in intensive work over a short period, it is obviously important that, during breaks, they should be able to obtain refreshments in relaxing, pleasant surroundings. The case studies, and some responses to the survey questionnaire, showed that whatever their premises, providers recognised the importance of bar and high quality catering facilities with adequate choice in restful surroundings. Providers may also need to consider noise levels, glare, distance of catering facilities from the teaching rooms etc.

16 The amount of residential accommodation to be provided will vary, but it is suggested that rooms should always be en-suite with twins and doubles available as well as singles, and a proportion equipped for disabled clients. Rooms need to be well-furnished and generally able to offer the standards expected in, at least, a 3 star hotel. The availability of work desks, computer sockets, mini-bar, safe and fax points in residential accommodation should be recognised.

DES/UCACE PROJECT ON GOOD PRACTICE IN CONTINUING VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (CVET) IN UNIVERSITIES

Key Issues: Buildings/Capital Investment

A: ACCOMMODATION

1. Which of the following types of accommodation for teaching/training are available in/are used by your institution for the provision of CVET courses?

Please tick all those that apply.

1. Separate building especially constructed for sole CVET use
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

2. Section of newly built larger complex purpose built for CVET
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

3. Purpose built CVET premises as a section of a newly built larger complex
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

4. Accommodation in rooms and facilities already in use which have been purpose-adapted for CVET use
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

5. Shared use with other departments of designated but not specially adapted accommodation for CVET
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

6. Shared use with other departments of non-designated, non specially adapted, teaching/training accommodation
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

7. Non-university accommodation and facilities
   with residential accommodation | |
   without residential accommodation | |

2. What proportion of your CVET provision takes place in:

	%
purpose built/purpose adapted accommodation	
shared use accommodation	
non-university accommodation	

3. To what extent do you find it difficult to run CVET courses on campus during term-time?

	Please tick
Very difficult	
Fairly difficult	
No difficulty	
Not relevant	

Please comment

4. Is your teaching/training accommodation available for hire by other organisations for private training purposes?

YES - all of it	
NO - some of it	
NO	

5. Is any further accommodation for CVET courses contracted but not yet built/available?

YES	
NO	

5(a) If YES is this

teaching/training accommodation	
residential accommodation	
both	
other facilities	

6. How is this accommodation to be financed?

7. Which of the following facilities are currently available to you in your University when you run CVET courses?

Please tick all that apply

7(a). For training purposes	In purpose built/ purpose-adapted CVET accommodation	In shared use accommodation
Lecture theatre(s)		
Teaching/seminar rooms		
Board Room		
Computer Suite(s)		
Language laboratory (ies)		
Exhibition area(s)		
Other facilities		

(b) Support Facilities	In purpose built/ purpose-adapted CVET accommodation	In shared use accommodation
Covenient car parking		
Reception area		
Computer workroom(s)		
Photocopying facilities		
Facsmile		
Public telephones		
Cloakrooms		
Bar(s)		
Dining Room(s)		
Lounge		
Access to leisure facilities		
Other facilities (please describe		

(c) Residential facilities (if available)		
Bedrooms en-suite		
Bedrooms without en-suite		
Residents' kitchen		
Bar(s)		
Dining Room(s)		
Lounge(s)		
Other facilities (please describe		

B: EQUIPMENT

8. Which of the following equipment for training (as distinct from accommodation) do you have available for CVET courses?

Please tick all that apply

Full sound system in leacture theatre(s)	
Full audio-visual facilities as standard	
Role play equipment	
Audio-visual conference facility	
Pendax Rail System (plus visual aids)	
Ceiling Screen	
Computer data projection equipment	
Other equipment on request (please describe)	

C: PUBLICITY

9. Do you use descriptions and/or photographs of accommodation and facilities in your publicity material?

YES	
NO	

9(a) If YES, which features are stressed?

D: LEVELS OF SATISFACTION

10. In your view, how satisfactory is the existing available teaching accommodation for CVET courses in your institution for the staff/customers who make use of it?

Please tick

	Staff	Customers
Satisfactory in all respects		
Satisfactory in some respects		
Unsatisfactory in all respects		

Please comment

11. In your view, how satisfactory is the existing available equipment for CVET courses in your institution for the staff/customers who make use of it?

	Please tick	
	Staff	Customers
Satisfactory in all respects		
Satisfactory in some respects		
Unsatisfactory in all respects		

Please comment

12. In your view, how satisfactory are the support facilities for CVET courses in your institution for the customers who make use of them?

	Please tick
Satisfactory in all respects	
Satisfactory in some respects	
Unsatisfactory in all respects	

Please comment

13. In your view, how satisfactory is the residential accommodation for CVET courses in your institution (if available) for the customers who make use of it.

	Please tick
Not available	
Satisfactory in all respects	
Satisfactory in some respects	
Unsatisfactory in all respects	

Please comment

14. **In your view, to what extent do the existing accommodation and facilities available for CVET courses in your institution limit your capacity to make provision?**

	Please tick			
	Teaching/training accommodation	Equipment	Support facilities	Residential accommodation
A great deal				
To some extent				
Not at all				

Please comment

E: FUTURE PLANS

15. To what extent do you anticipate that CVET activity will expand in your institution in the near future?

	Please tick
A great deal	
To some extent	
A little	
No expansion	

16. To what extent is your institution's ability to provide suitable teaching/training accommodation for CVET courses a crucial factor in your planned levels of expansion?

	Please tick
Very important	
Fairly important	
Of no importance	
Not relevant	

Please comment

17. To what extent is your institution's ability to provide suitable residential accommodation for CVET courses a crucial factor in your planned levels of expansion?

Please tick

Very important
Fairly important
Of no importance
Not relevant

Please comment

18. Are there any further comments which you would like to make about buildings, capital investment, training and residential accommodation and equipment in connection with the provision of CVET courses?

Thank you for taking the trouble to complete this questionnaire. What you have written will contribute to the success of the DES Good Practice in CVET Project. Please return the questionnaire by Friday, June 5th 1992 to Alexandra Withnall, Lancaster University, Office of Adult Continuing Education, Cartmel College, Lancaster, LA1 4YL.

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